THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) In accordance with the policy on NRI/OCB and foreign equity participation in the domestic air transport sector, foreign equity participation of foreign airlines, directly or indirectly, is prohibited, consequently guidelines have been issued in this regard Vide AIC No. 4/ 1998 on 17th July, 1998, which, inter-alia, prohibit leasing of aircraft from any foreign airlines or its subsidiary. However, wet leasing of an aircraft for a short term period is allowed from any source subject to the fulfilment of the guidelines issued by the Government/DGCA.

Aircraft leased by Jet Airways and other operators not conforming to these guidelines cannot operate in the domestic sector.

Pilot licence issued by Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Udaan Academy

4441, SHRI C.P. THIRUNAVUK-KARASU: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of persons who had flying training in "Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Udaan Academy" in the years 1995 to-1996 and 1996 to 1997; and

(b) the number of persons who have been awarded commercial pilot licences and commercial helicopter licences?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) A total of 48 and 60 (including 37 persons from previous financial year) persons were imparted flying training by the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Uran Akademi (IGRUA) during the years 1995-96 and 1996-97 respectively.

(b) A total of 23 persons were awarded Commercial Pilot Licences during the years 1995-96 and 1996-97 by IGRUA. No person was awarded Commercial Helicopter Pilot Licences during these years.

Wet Leasing of Aircraft

4442. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria considered by Government in providing permission to airlines companies to take aircraft on wet lease;

(b) the number of aircraft which are on wet lease with different airlines operating in India, with company-wise breakup; what was the urgency to hire them;

(c) whether any cost-benefit analysis of wet leasing of aircraft being done;

(d) if so, what are the findings; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) Wet-leasing of aircraft is not permitted except in emergency situations like:— (i) Exfsting aircraft of an operator is grounded for maintenance checks; (ii) Existing aircraft is involved in some accident/incident resulting in reduction in capacity of an operator; (iii) Reduction in capacity due to expiry of lease or delay in finalisation of new lease agreement; (iv) For revival of sick operators who should have an agreement with the lessor initially for wet lease for a period not exceeding six months and thereafter automatic conversion to dry lease for the remaining period of lease.

However, in all such cases, there shall be no increase in the capacity of the operator and the wet lease operations in the country shall be subject to conditions stipulated by the DGCA for operation, maintenance and safety aspects.

(b) M/s Jet Airways has been permitted to wet-lease two aircraft for short-term to meet the capacity shortages on account of grounding of (i) one aircraft that met with an accident recently and (ii) safety inspection checks required for all such aircraft (B-737-300//40a/500) as advised by the manufacturer, the Boeing Company.

(c) to (e) Cost benefit analysis is done by the airlines concerned.